

**SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR TRACKING DISTRIBUTION OF DIGITAL
CONTENT**

ABSTRACT

A system and method for associating a list of recipient identifiers with an
5 electronic message is provided. An application is launched in conjunction with a
messaging application (207) on a messaging capable device (200). When a user
initiates creation of an electronic message and enters at least one recipient's
information (403) the application adds the recipient's information into a header of
the electronic message (411) that is encrypted and embedded into the message. In
10 addition a unique message identifier (409) that associates the message with a
sender and recipients is added to the message. The message, header information,
and any attachments are lastly encrypted into a message object (415) which
cannot be edited by message recipients. Any subsequent forwarding of the
message by a recipient follows a similar process such that a tree of custody of the
15 electronic message is traceable.